

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A process for manufacturing and filling flexible pouches, the process comprising:

blow molding a preform having a neck portion into a flexible pouch having a neck finish;

filling said flexible pouch with a desired product;

closing or capping the filled pouch;

wherein the neck portion of the preform and pouch are used to handle the preform and pouch throughout the process.

2. The process of Claim 1 wherein said process further comprises decorating and/or dressing the pouch.

3. The process of Claim 2 wherein said pouch is filled prior to decorating and/or dressing of the pouch.

4. The process of Claim 1 wherein said process further comprises placing the pouch in a rigid container.

5. The process of Claim 4 wherein said pouch is filled prior to placing the pouch in a rigid container.

6. The process of Claim 4 wherein said rigid container is a box.

7. The process of Claim 1 wherein said pouch has at least one layer.

8. The process of Claim 7 wherein at least one layer comprises polyethylene terephthalate or polypropylene.

9. The process of Claim 1 wherein said pouch has one or more exterior layers comprising a material selected from the group consisting of polyethylene, polypropylene, modified polyolefins, modified elastomers, polystyrene, thermoplastic polyurethane, copolyester barrier materials, phenoxy-type thermoplastics, polyamides, polyethylene naphthalate, polyethylene naphthalate copolymers, polyethylene naphthalate/polyethylene terephthalate blends, polyethylene terephthalate, compatibilized polymer blends, and combinations thereof.

10. An apparatus for making and filling flexible pouches comprising:

a handling system that conveys preforms and/or flexible pouches through a manufacturing and filling system; and

a manufacturing system comprising a blow molding machine;

a filling system comprising:

a filling machine

a closing or capping machine

wherein the handling system conveys the preforms and flexible pouches throughout the entire system by the neck portion.

11. The apparatus of Claim 10 wherein said blow molding machine blow molds a preform with a neck into a flexible pouch having a neck.

12. The apparatus of Claim 10 wherein said filling machine fills a flexible pouch with a desired product.

13. The apparatus of Claim 10 wherein said closing or capping machine closes a filled flexible pouch.

14. The apparatus of Claim 10 wherein said apparatus further comprises a system which decorates and/or dresses the flexible pouch.

15. The apparatus of Claim 14 wherein said system which decorates and/or dresses the pouch is placed before the filling system.

16. The apparatus of Claim 10 wherein said apparatus further comprises a system which places the flexible pouch into a rigid container.

17. The apparatus of Claim 16 wherein said system which places the flexible pouch into a rigid container is placed before the filling system.

18. The apparatus of Claim 16 wherein said rigid container is a box.

19. The apparatus of Claim 10 wherein said pouch has at least one layer.

20. The apparatus of Claim 19 wherein at least one layer comprises polyethylene terephthalate or polypropylene.

21. The apparatus of Claim 10 wherein said pouch has one or more exterior layers comprising a material selected from the group consisting of polyethylene, polypropylene, modified polyolefins, modified elastomers, polystyrene, thermoplastic polyurethane, copolyester barrier materials, phenoxy-type thermoplastics, polyamides, polyethylene

naphthalate, polyethylene naphthalate copolymers, polyethylene naphthalate/polyethylene terephthalate blends, polyethylene terephthalate, compatibilized polymer blends, and combinations thereof.